The need for psychosocial services is great in the lung cancer community. We assumed 225,000 people will be diagnosed this year and research indicates people with lung cancer experience high levels of distress and have greater unmet physical and emotional needs than those with other types of cancer. A significant unmet need for people with lung cancer is social support.

In-person support groups are valuable for people affected by lung cancer because they offer the chance to connect with others who understand. Benefits of groups include increased feelings of control and confidence and decrease in daily distress.

Most people with the disease prefer lung cancer-specific support groups, however such groups can be especially challenging to start and maintain. As a result, there are fewer than 100 lung cancer-specific support groups active in the United States.

LUNG CANCER ALLIANCE
The efforts of national cancer organizations to ensure those diagnosed receive the necessary diagnosis and treatment services to improve lung cancer outcomes are making a difference in the United States for those affected. At Cancer Care, the United Kingdom (UK) and Australia (AUS).

FACILITATOR AWARD
Through contact with lung cancer group facilitators, we have gained a deeper understanding of the challenges in starting and maintaining lung cancer groups, as well as the creative ways successful facilitators have overcome these challenges.

Since 2009, we have recognized un-congression dedication through the annual Lung Cancer Support Group Facilitator Award.

FACILITATOR SURVEY
To learn more, in 2013 we partnered with two other organizations to conduct a survey of lung cancer groups facilitators in the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK) and Australia (AUS).

Key Findings
- 74 responses (25% response rate)
- 75% in US and 77% in Canada whose groups were professionally led
- Group size: 8-12 members
- Comprised of both survivors and loved ones
- Professionally led (more the case in the US)
- Co-facilitated
- Both education and support
- Professionally led (more the case in the US)
- Comprised of both survivors and loved ones
- Once a month
- The National Lung Cancer Support Group Network was launched with the initiation of two support group pilots, both within an area of high need with little support: the Tobacco Belt.

Professionally Led Groups
The pilot allows us to sponsor and co-brand events, hire facilitators, and conduct them at a Cancer Support Community affiliated center, in a hospital setting and the third is an independent cancer support facility.

The three groups in this pilot are professionally led, take place twice a month and include a research component to more fully help us understand the successes and challenges around starting new groups.

Peer Led Groups
Peer led cancer support groups are controversial in many professional circles. However, research shows that such groups can be successful. And in some areas, both of these approaches are being tried.

Building on lessons learned from other organizations, the second pilot allows us to test the methods of identifying engaging and training appropriate lung cancer survivors interested in leading groups. These groups will be based on a successful model in use by a survivor facilitator and will be supported by a survivor facilitator who involves monthly meetings attended by a healthcare professional such as a patient navigator, not as facilitator but as a resource and go to person for group members who have questions about lung cancer or need consultation about diagnosis and treatment plans.

At completion of the pilots, six additional lung cancer groups will be available in areas of high need, we continue to work to develop additional support groups to increase the availability of the Troubleshooting Guide and connecting those facilitators with successful others for information and assistance.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS
Through collaboration with the Cancer Care Community’s Research and Training Institute, the professionally-led group pilot includes a research component to measure the impact on attendees through pre- and post questionnaires, follow up forms and focus groups. This research will add to the body of knowledge on the effectiveness of lung cancer-specific support groups, which is lacking.

We will also conduct research on the peer-led pilot groups and will be able to compare them against the professionally-led groups as well. We hope our efforts will lead researchers to use our site and our knowledge to study the all-important questions around supporting successful lung cancer group and how non-profit organizations can assist in helping them to thrive.

FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
The support group pilots are funded by a generous grant from the Bristol Myers Squibb Foundation.

LCA Unite is supported by grants from Merck, Celgene, Genentech, AstaZineca and Pfizer.

CONCLUSION
Through a thoughtful and integrated approach, Lung Cancer Alliance is helping the lung cancer community access vital psychosocial support. We offer support groups expertise on improving groups and through the research component of the pilots, we are measuring the impact of the groups and the replication of the model.

Importantly, we are learning valuable information and best practices as well as adding to the limited body of knowledge on starting and maintaining successful lung cancer support groups.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM ELEMENTS

SUPPORT GROUP PILOTS
The results of the survey, along with an extensive literature review, lead us to launch Lung Cancer Support Group Troubleshooting Guide, full of creative ideas and group strategies that can become successful.

SUPPORT GROUP TRACKING
Filling the Gaps
Even if lung cancer support groups were available in all parts of the country, some people who seek support would not attend. It can be hard to get in an in-person group, physically or emotionally. Sometimes a person can’t find someone with similar issues who can speak to them on the phone. To fill gaps in support, we offer two unique ways for people to connect.

The Phone Buddy Program connects survivor volunteers with patients who have urgent questions about lung cancer treatment by telephone for information, hope and support.

FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
The support group pilots are funded by a generous grant from the Bristol Myers Squibb Foundation.

LCA Unite is supported by grants from Merck, Celgene, Genentech, AstaZineca and Pfizer.

CONCLUSION
Through a thoughtful and integrated approach, Lung Cancer Alliance is helping the lung cancer community access vital psychosocial support. We offer support groups expertise on improving groups and through the research component of the pilots, we are measuring the impact of the groups and the replication of the model.

Importantly, we are learning valuable information and best practices as well as adding to the limited body of knowledge on starting and maintaining successful lung cancer support groups.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM ELEMENTS

SUPPORT GROUP PILOTS
Since 2009, we have recognized un-congression dedication through the annual Lung Cancer Support Group Facilitator Award.

FACILITATOR AWARD
Through contact with lung cancer group facilitators, we have gained a deeper understanding of the challenges in starting and maintaining lung cancer groups, as well as the creative ways successful facilitators have overcome these challenges.

Since 2009, we have recognized un-congression dedication through the annual Lung Cancer Support Group Facilitator Award.

FACILITATOR SURVEY
To learn more, in 2013 we partnered with two other organizations to conduct a survey of lung cancer groups facilitators in the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK) and Australia (AUS).

Key Findings
- 74 responses (25% response rate)
- 75% in US and 77% in Canada whose groups were professionally led
- Group size: 8-12 members
- Comprised of both survivors and loved ones
- Professionally led (more the case in the US)
- Co-facilitated
- Both education and support
- Professionally led (more the case in the US)
- Comprised of both survivors and loved ones
- Once a month
- The National Lung Cancer Support Group Network was launched with the initiation of two support group pilots, both within an area of high need with little support: the Tobacco Belt.

Professionally Led Groups
The pilot allows us to sponsor and co-brand events, hire facilitators, and conduct them at a Cancer Support Community affiliated center, in a hospital setting and the third is an independent cancer support facility.

The three groups in this pilot are professionally led, take place twice a month and include a research component to more fully help us understand the successes and challenges around starting new groups.

Peer Led Groups
Peer led cancer support groups are controversial in many professional circles. However, research shows that such groups can be successful. And in some areas, both of these approaches are being tried.

Building on lessons learned from other organizations, the second pilot allows us to test the methods of identifying engaging and training appropriate lung cancer survivors interested in leading groups. These groups will be based on a successful model in use by a survivor facilitator and will be supported by a survivor facilitator who involves monthly meetings attended by a healthcare professional such as a patient navigator, not as facilitator but as a resource and go to person for group members who have questions about lung cancer or need consultation about diagnosis and treatment plans.

At completion of the pilots, six additional lung cancer groups will be available in areas of high need, we continue to work to develop additional support groups to increase the availability of the Troubleshooting Guide and connecting those facilitators with successful others for information and assistance.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS
Through collaboration with the Cancer Care Community’s Research and Training Institute, the professionally-led group pilot includes a research component to measure the impact on attendees through pre- and post questionnaires, follow up forms and focus groups. This research will add to the body of knowledge on the effectiveness of lung cancer-specific support groups, which is lacking.

We will also conduct research on the peer-led pilot groups and will be able to compare them against the professionally-led groups as well. We hope our efforts will lead researchers to use our site and our knowledge to study the all-important questions around supporting successful lung cancer group and how non-profit organizations can assist in helping them to thrive.

FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
The support group pilots are funded by a generous grant from the Bristol Myers Squibb Foundation.

LCA Unite is supported by grants from Merck, Celgene, Genentech, AstaZineca and Pfizer.